growth of the backward regions during the 9th Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details of the action plan for infrastructure development for backword regions in the country in general and Jharkhand region in particular; and

(c) the details of the projects identified and estimated cost thereof, project-wise and whether Government have identified the proposals for private investments/ participations and if so, the details thereof in respect of Jharkhand region?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) to (c) The 9th Five Year Plan has not been finalised as yet. The strategy for development of transport infrastructure would depend on size of the plan to be approved by the Planning Commission. It is too early at this stage to identify projects and proposals for private participation.

As regards development of National Highways in Jharkhand region in Bihar, works costing nearly Rs. 173.75 crores including the fourlanning at a cost of Rs. 127.89 crores in a length of 43 Km. on NH-2 are in different stages of progress. Further there is provision of Rs. 12.00 crore in Annual Plan 1997-1998 for development of National Highways in Jharkhand region in Bihar.

Service Tax on road transport sector

99. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the average freight per vehicle per year;

(b) the average number of vehicles on the road per year;

(c) what are the reasons that Government failed to levy Service Tax on road transport sector and thus losing potential revenue to the tune of Rs. 7500 crore and its possible deployment for road infrastructure;

(d) whether the Indian Foundation of Transport Research and Training has recommended that the Service Tax should be collected from 50 thousand transport companies; and

(e) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha.

राजमार्गों के लिए विश्व बैंक से सहायता

100. **श्रीमती मालती शर्मा:** क्या जल-भूतल परिवहन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार देश में राजमार्गों को चौड़ा करने तथा इनकी दशा में सुधार करने के लिए विश्व बैंक से सहायता लेने पर विचार कर रही है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(ग) राजमार्गों के सुधार के लिए विश्व बैंक से ऐसी सहायता पहले कब प्राप्त की गई थी तथा प्राप्त की गई सहायता का ब्यौरा क्या है?

जल-भूतल परिवहन मंत्री (श्री टी.जी. वेंकटरामन): (क) और (ख) भारतीय राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग प्राधिकरण ने दिल्ली से कलकत्ता और चेन्नई से मदुरै के लिए मार्गों के बारे में व्यवहार्यता अध्ययन किया है। तदुपरान्त, ये परियोजना ऋण सहायता के लिए विश्व बैंक के पास भेजी जाएंगी।

(ग) पिछली बार विश्व बैंक से द्वितीय राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग परियोजना (उड़ीसा में राज्यीय सड़कों पर 6 पुलों के पुनर्निर्माण सहित) के लिए जून, 1992 में 306 मिलियन-अमरीकी डालर की ऋण सहायता पर हस्ताक्षर हुए थे। यह ऋण जून, 2001 में समाप्त होगा।

Changes in Nattional shipping Policy

101. PROF. NAUNIHAL SINGH: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some changes have been made in the National Shipping Policy;

(b) if so, what are its salient features;